

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [medboardconsultation](#)  
**Subject:** Submission to the public consultation on good medical practice  
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Dear Medical Board of Australia,

We are very concerned that section 4.8 of the draft code of conduct requires doctors to be “culturally safe and respectful.” But the way that this section is written could easily be interpreted to mean that doctors must comply with a patient’s beliefs about culture, gender identity and sexuality, with no provision given for a doctor to differ in his professional judgement.

However, to achieve good medical outcomes for patients, doctors must be free to challenge medically relevant issues that patients might seek to avoid, such as Islamic cultural issues like female genital mutilation and child marriage; gender identity disorder and homosexual practices. And while it is well and good to always respect the patient, the wording of this section of the Code implies the doctor must actually respect behaviours, such as trans-genderism and homosexuality which are known to put the patient at substantially greater risk of negative medical outcomes.

Clearly it would be medically irresponsible for a doctor not to warn his patients about these behaviours and advise ceasing such activity on medical grounds. But as the draft code currently stands it is unclear whether doing so would breach the code.

In light of this uncertainty, please recommend retaining the unamended existing Code of Conduct instead.

Yours sincerely,

Diane and Rick Whittle

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